

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. ^B4687

1. Name

Historic 1600-1638 North Durham Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 1600-1638 North Durham Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21205 county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number telephone
city, town state & zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
date federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check One

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check One

☒ original site
☐ moved:
date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of twenty two-story, two-bay wide late Italianate style-style brick houses with shed roofs and sheet metal cornices were built in 1892-93 by August Weber and Henry Westphal, builders of working class houses in East Baltimore. Only a few of the houses retain their original brick facades, which were originally painted, with the basement areas painted white to imitate the marble used in more expensive houses. The remainder have been formstoned. After the use of wood was outlawed for cornices in 1892, sheet metal became the material of choice. This row, and its mate across the street, are unusual in the area for their use of sheet metal to recreate all of the parts of the late Italianate-style wooden cornice, including the long, scroll-sawn brackets and lower molding strip. The more common form of cornice at this time for vernacular housing makes use of a sheet metal crown molding set above a frieze area of stepped-back bricks—a design much easier and cheaper to accomplish.

The houses are two stories in height, 12' wide, and occupy lots 61' deep. Each house is three small rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. The houses are constructed in running bond and were originally painted. Each house has a single hooded chimney located at the rear of the house. The cornice consists of a crown molding supported by three long, ribbed "scroll-sawn" brackets that connect to a lower molding strip and have trefoil ends. The frieze area is decorated with a row of molded dentils. At each end of the row the more typical form of a sheet metal end bracket concludes the composition.

The door and window openings have segmentally arched brick lintels, with plain tympanums. The sills are wood. Showing the stylistic influence of late Italianate designs, all of the windows remain tall and narrow. Only a few of the original 2/2 sash remain. The doorways have single-light transoms framed by a row of cut-work decoration, and show a variety of replacement door types. The houses sit on fairly low basements lit by a single-light sash. Each front door (no original doors remain) is reached by three concrete steps.

8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This group of houses is significant in that it represents the level of architectural stylishness achieved by many builders of small street houses in the late nineteenth century. The houses were built by August Weber and Henry Westphal, fairly prolific East Baltimore builders, according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the period c. 1880 to 1910. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and north-east of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell for \$1,200 to \$1,500; small street houses for \$500 to \$600.

In this particular case Weber and Westphal acquired the entire northwestern quarter of the block, building ten 12'-wide two-story houses and five 12'9"-wide houses on the east side of Ann Street and the twenty houses on the west side of Durham, as well as the twenty houses on the east side of Durham. Another builder, Walter Sewell, built the fourteen two-story houses along the north side of Federal St., which ranged in width from 13'4" in mid-row to 14'4" at each end (with the lot at the corner of Federal and Oliver Streets being extra large, at 15'). Westphal and Weber sold their houses to a mix of German-American and Bohemian owner-occupants and investors.¹ In this way, if local workers could not afford the cash down payment required they could rent a house for the average rent of \$8 a month while saving to become homeowners themselves through the help of local building and loan associations.

¹ BCLR, JB 1410/193; JB 1464/572

9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

city, town Baltimore

date June 2000

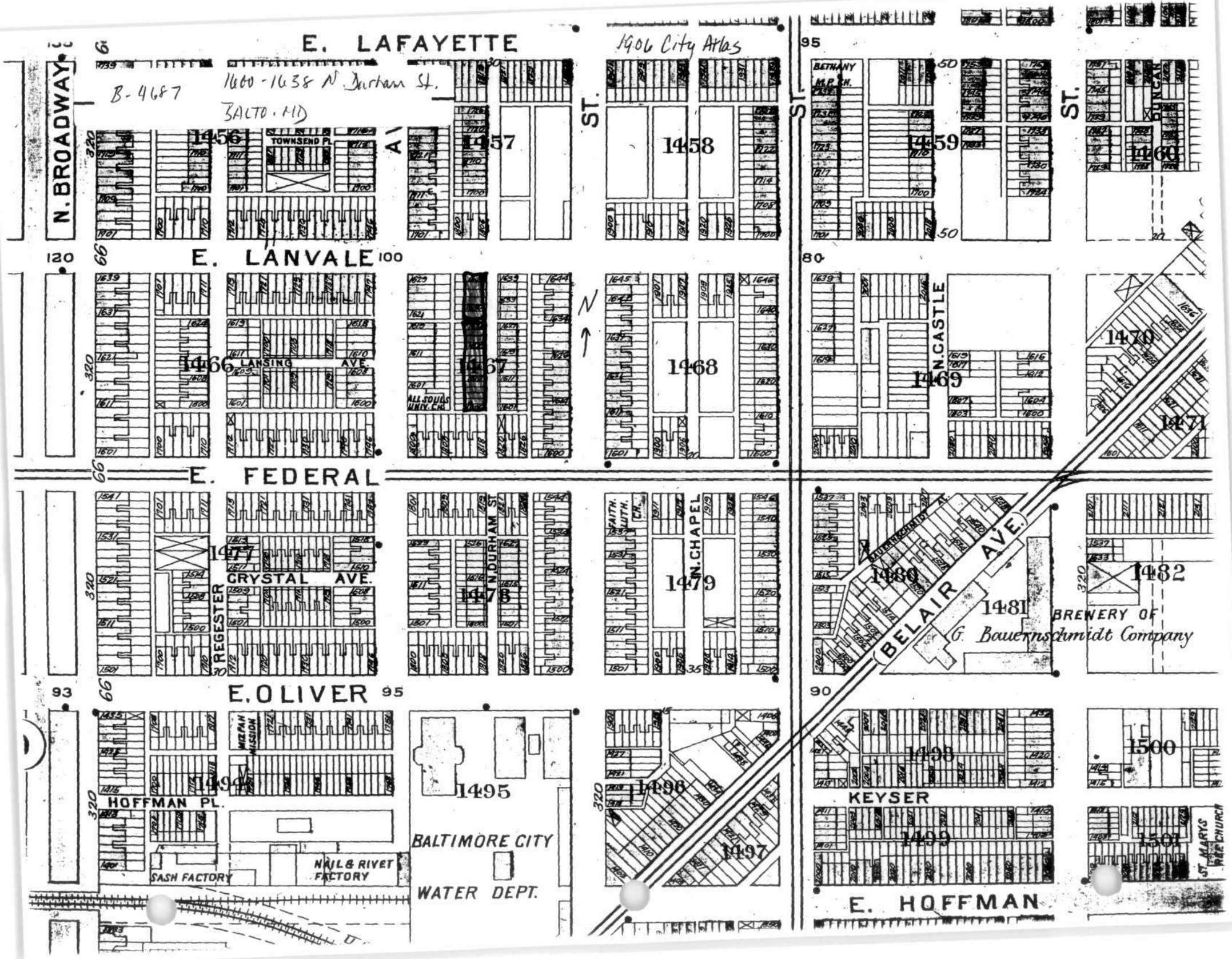
telephone

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of property rights.

Return to:
DHCP/DHCD
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032-2023



E. LAFAYETTE

1906 City Atlas

N. BROADWAY

B-4687

1600-1638 N. Durham St.

BALTO. MD

ST.

95

BETHANY
M.P. CH.

ST.

E. LANVALE

120

100

LANSING AVE.

N
↑

1468

80

N. CASTLE

E. FEDERAL

CRYSTAL AVE.

N. CHAPEL

1479

BELAIR AVE.

BREWERY OF
G. Bauernschmidt Company

E. OLIVER

93

95

HOFFMAN PL.

1495

BALTIMORE CITY

WATER DEPT.

320

1496

1497

90

KEYSER

1499

E. HOFFMAN

1500

1501

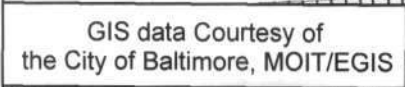
ST. MARYS
WEE CHURCH

B-4687

Block 1467, Lots 053-072

Baltimore City

Baltimore East Quad.





1600 Durham Ws N half
53

100

[17]030 0211 H H N 22

B-4687

1600-1638 N. Durham St.
BALTO. MD.

S. Allan

8/97

MD SHPO